



PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Appl. No.: 09/518,583 Confirmation No.: 5843
Applicant(s): Chee-Seng Chow, et al.
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Art Unit: 2134
Examiner: Mossadeq Zia
Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ACCESSING A REMOTE SERVER
FROM AN INTRANET WITH A SINGLE SIGN-ON

Docket No.: 047138/257085 November 3, 2005
Customer No.: 00826

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Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

PRE-APPEAL REQUEST FOR REVIEW

Sir:

Applicant in the above-identified patent application hereby requests review of the Official Action dated August 10, 2005, rejecting Claims 1-22 of the above-identified application. This request is being filed concurrent with a Notice of Appeal, and no amendments are being filed herewith.

Remarks/Arguments in support of this request begin on page 2 and end on page 6 of this paper, and accordingly include no more than the five (5) pages of remarks permitted to be provided.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This communication is filed in response to the final Official Action of August 10, 2005. The final Official Action rejects Claims 1-4, 7-14, and 17-22 under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,453,353 to Win et al. The Official Action also rejects Claims 5, 6, 15, and 16 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Win in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,144,959 to Anderson et al. As explained below, however, Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention includes statutory subject matter and is patentably distinct from the cited references and request reconsideration and reversal of all of the aforementioned rejections.

Win discloses that a single sign-on may be utilized to give a user access to authorized web resources, where access to web resources is based on the user's role in the organization. Thus, users are not required to log in individually to each web resource. More specifically, the user accesses an Access Server that stores a log-in page, Authentication Client Module, and Access Menu Module. The Authentication Client Module verifies a user's name and password with a Registry Server, where the Registry Server stores information about users (e.g., name, password, and locale information), resources (e.g., web pages, web sites, etc.), and roles (e.g., employee, customer, distributor, etc.) of the users. If the name and password are correct, the Authentication Client Module reads the user's roles from the Registry Server, and then encrypts and sends this information in a cookie to the user's browser. After selecting a resource, the browser sends an open URL request and cookie(s) to a Protected Web Server, which is protected by a Runtime Module. The Runtime Module decrypts information contained in the cookie and uses the information to verify that the user is authorized to access the resource. The resource uses the cookie to return information that is customized based on the user's name and roles.

Anderson discloses a system and method for managing user accounts in a communication network. The system is capable of using a single set of credentials to access servers that are centrally located and managed such that an administrator does not have to maintain separate accounts on a shared workstation for all users. A user logging in at a client workstation provides credentials through a log-in interface. An authentication process is employed to authenticate the user to the local client, as well as to one or more servers. The authentication process compares credentials contained in a request for access generated by the client to entries within a domain

database. If the credentials match, the domain authentication process allows access to the server process and resources. Moreover, Anderson discloses that there may be a client that provides an administrator access to a directory services database contained within a server that may support a client workstation object including log-in information. The log-in information could include a dynamic log-in flag that is used to indicate whether user information should be retrieved from the client workstation object to create a user account on a client. Thus, when the log-in process is initiated at the client and inspects the workstation object, the log-in process may need to identify if a user account should be created in the local access database of the client.

In contrast to the disclosures described above, independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 22 recite a method, systems, and a machine-readable medium for performing multiple user authentications with a single sign-on by performing a first user authentication, selecting a remote server, and sending a token to the remote server that contains authentication information responsive to the first authentication and information regarding an account for the user including at least one of a new account for the user and an update to an existing account for the user. The authentication information is then decoded to induce a second user authentication.

User profile information may be stored by the remote server. (Page 18, line 7). The information regarding a new or updated user account that is included in the token of the claimed invention may come in various forms. With respect to the embodiment of Figure 8 of the present application, the token may include fields, including a field for a new user flag that is set when the Intranet server detects a new user. (Page 16, lines 12-15). The embodiment depicted by Figure 9 of the present application adds the capability to transmit new or updated user profile information to the remote server. The remote server may store user profile information that may help the remote server, such as a travel reservation and book service, provide efficient service to the user (*e.g.*, dietary choices, seating preferences, travel spending limits, *etc.*). Once the token is determined to be valid, the token is examined for user profile information, and the remote server may create an account for a new user or update an account for an existing user depending upon the user profile information. Thus, the multiple user authentication of the claimed invention not only provides a single sign-on procedure, but also provides a capacity for efficiently creating or updating user accounts at the remote server.

In the Response to Arguments, the Official Action finds that “Win teaches sending the cookies with the updated information to remote servers.” In addition, the Official Action alleges that information regarding user configuration or user roles may be modified or updated. The Official Action interprets Win as disclosing that user information corresponds to “roles,” while “role cookies” are sent to remote resources. Moreover, the Official Action finds that Win discloses that new account information can be sent to remote resource with the role cookie to be updated by a user or an administrator.

While Win discloses a single sign-on through an Access Server to access protected web resources, Win does not disclose sending a token to a remote server that contains authentication information responsive to a first authentication and information regarding an account for the user including at least one of a new account for the user and an update to an existing account for the user, as recited by independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 22. Win arguably discloses that the URL request and associated cookies contain authentication information, as the cookies contain profile information and a list of the user's roles. The profile information, such as username and password, allows the user to log in to the system and is used to verify that the user is authorized to access a resource, while the roles, such as employee or supplier, define the resources that are available to the user.

However, updating the profile information of Win may be achieved when the user updates profile or locale information within the Profile Management Service of Authentication Client module, which is associated with the Access Server, not the remote resources, such as the remote server that maintains the current user account information pursuant to the claimed invention. Moreover, Win discloses that an administrator may find, list, create, delete, and modify user role records. Therefore, updated information is not included with the cookies since updating occurs at the Access Server or Registry Server (see Figures 1 and 4 of Win). Similarly, Win does not disclose that the cookies contain information regarding a new account for the user. Simply providing the capability of updating or adding a new account is significantly different than providing information regarding a new account or an update to an existing account with a token to a remote server, as recited by the claimed invention.

The Examiner relies upon col. 8, line 46 – col. 9, line 40 for the proposition that user information relates to “roles” and that “role cookies” are sent to remote resources. Assuming that the Examiner’s characterization of Win is correct, the specific portion of Win relied upon only discloses that users may change their account profiles at the Access Server. This is unlike the claims of the present application, as described above, in which tokens reflective of new or updated user account information are sent to a remote server. In this regard, Win nowhere discloses that the cookies contain information regarding an update to an existing account or information regarding a new account in addition to containing authentication information.

The Examiner further relies upon col. 7, lines 58-67 of Win as disclosing that cookies may be sent with updated information. However, this particular portion of Win pertains to “configuration changes.” Win discloses that an example of a configuration change could be adding resources to the Protected Server, where Win describes examples of resources as web pages, web sites, a web-enabled database, and an applet. Thus, configuration changes correspond to system level changes rather than information regarding an account for a user. In particular, configuration changes are distinctly different than information regarding an update to an existing user’s account or information regarding a new account for a user, as recited by the claimed invention. As such, the Examiner mischaracterizes configuration changes as corresponding to “user configurations,” as stated in the Response to Arguments.

Also, in the Response to Arguments the Official Action finds that “Win teaches that new account information can be sent to a remote resource (or server) with the ‘role cookie’ which can be updated by either the Administrator or a user.” However, the Official Action again relies upon the portion of Win that discloses configuration changes, which as described above, is distinctly different from tokens containing information regarding an update to an existing account or information regarding a new account for the user, as recited by the claimed invention.

Moreover, Anderson shares similar shortcomings to that of Win in that Anderson also does not teach or suggest sending a token to a remote server that contains authentication information responsive to a first authentication and information regarding an account for the user including at least one of a new account for the user and an update to an existing account for the user. Although Anderson arguably discloses sending authentication information in the form of

credential information, the credential information does not include information regarding a new account and/or an update to an existing account for a user, as recited by the claimed invention. Anderson discloses that credential information corresponds to username, password, log-in information for a database, a log-in script, retinal scan, or fingerprint information. Thus, the credential information is only used for authentication.

Applicants also submit that a number of dependent claims, including Claims 5, 6, 15, and 16, are further distinguishable from the cited references, including Anderson. In this regard, Claims 5 and 15 recite that the information regarding an account for the user in the token includes a new user flag, while Claims 6 and 16 recite that the remote server creates a new user account in response to the new user flag. Although Anderson discloses that a dynamic log-in flag 317 may be utilized, the flag is maintained in a directory services database 223 that is associated with a server 103A (See Figure 2A of Anderson). The log-in process 207 is initiated at a client 102A that inspects the directory services database 223 to determine whether a new user account should be created in the local access database 203 maintained in the client. In this regard, the dynamic log-in flag is not contained within a token that is sent from the client to the server, as recited by Claims 5, 6, 15, and 16, as the flag is pre-stored at the server. Therefore, the dynamic user flag is not contained within a token that is sent to the server due to the fact that the flag is already located at the server before the log-in process begins.

Thus, neither Win nor Anderson, taken individually or in combination teach or suggest including information regarding an account for the user including at least one of a new account for the user and an update to an existing account for the user in a token that is sent to a remote server, as recited by independent Claims 1, 11, 21, and 22. Since the independent claims are patentably distinct from the cited references, the claims that depend therefrom are also distinguishable from the cited references for at least the same reasons since the dependent claims include each of the elements of a respective independent claim. In addition, Applicants submit that a number of dependent claims, including Claims 5, 6, 15, and 16, are further distinguishable from the cited references. Consequently, Applicants submit that, for at least those reasons above, the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) are overcome.

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Reply to final Office Action of August 10, 2005

CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections be reversed and that a Notice of Allowance be issued.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,



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